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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/996,029	11/19/2001	Bradley W. Smith	14140	2046

7590

04/08/2003

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EXAMINER

DUNN, DAVID R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3616

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DATE MAILED: 04/08/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/996,029

Applicant(s)

SMITH, BRADLEY W.

Examiner

David Dunn

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 November 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 22-28 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-8, 11-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5,9 and 10 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-21, drawn to an airbag inflator diffusion system, classified in class 280, subclass 740.
 - II. Claims 22-28, drawn to a method for fabricating an inflator diffuser, classified in class 29, subclass 432.1.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the diffuser does not require providing a planar rectangular blank and rolling the blank such that the edges overlap.
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group II is not required for Group I, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

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5. During a telephone conversation with Sally Brown on March 25, 2003 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-21. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 22-28 withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Information Disclosure Statement

6. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 2/22/02 is acknowledged and has been considered by the examiner. See enclosed IDS form.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-13, and 15-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ishi et al. (4,068,862).

Ishi et al. discloses an airbag inflator diffusion system comprising: an airbag inflator (14) having an exhaust gas exit port (20); a tubular sleeve (80) configured to receive the inflator and secure the inflator within the sleeve (see Figure 1), the sleeve being configured to expand radially (see Figure 3) under a force of impinging exhaust gas from the exit port to form an exhaust passage (under 86) between the inflator and the sleeve (see also column 3, lines 54-56).

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The sleeve comprises a solid section (86) configured to receive direct impingement of the exhaust gas from the exit port and direct the gas through the exhaust passage. The sleeve comprises a permeable section (82) adjacent to the solid section. As seen in Figure 1, the solid section circumscribes the exit ports. With respect to claims 11 and 12, Ishi et al. notes that the sleeve (80) is made of a metal or a heat resistant synthetic resin; resins have an inherent degree of flexibility; metals are rigid. The permeable section comprises a plurality of holes (82) formed in the sleeve. The cross-sectional shape of the sleeve is substantially the same as the cross-sectional shape of the inflator (see Figure 1). The solid sections are positioned between permeable sections along a length of the sleeve.

With respect to claim 20, the method of manufacturing is immaterial to the apparatus as claimed as Ishi shows the same final product.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishi et al. in view of Bauer et al. (5,447,105).

Ishi et al. is discussed above and fails to show the permeable section comprising a porous material.

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Bauer et al. teaches a gas generator (see Figure 1) with a sleeve (5) with a porous material (20).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Ishi et al. with the teachings of Bauer et al. to include a porous material over the holes to better filter the gas.

Allowable Subject Matter

11. Claims 5, 9, and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Corion and Morfouace et al. show deflector shields that expand under the gas pressure. Yokoyama shows a diffuser of interest. Wallner et al. shows a diffuser of interest. Strasser shows an air bag diverter of interest.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Dunn whose telephone number is 703-305-0049. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thur, alt. Fridays, 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 703-308-2089. The fax phone numbers for the

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organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-7687 for regular communications and 703-305-7687 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-1113.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Dunn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Dunn
Examiner
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